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Action

Professional Services Committee

Proposed Modification of the Commission's General Preconditions for All Educator Preparation Programs

Executive Summary: This item presents proposed General Preconditions for all educator preparation programs.

Policy Question: Are the proposed General Preconditions appropriate and adequate?

Recommended Action: Staff recommends that the Commission adopt the proposed revised General Preconditions.

Presenters: Cheryl Hickey, Administrator, Professional Services Division

Strategic Plan Goal

II. Program Quality and Accountability

- ◆ Develop and maintain rigorous, meaningful, and relevant standards that drive program quality and effectiveness for the preparation of the education workforce and are responsive to the needs of California's diverse student population.

March 2013

Proposed Modifications of the Commission's General Preconditions for All Educator Preparation Programs

Introduction

This agenda item presents proposed General Preconditions for educator preparation programs for the Commission's consideration and possible adoption.

Background

California currently has a set of adopted General Preconditions that all Commission-approved educator preparation programs must meet in order to offer programs leading to a California certificate or authorization (Appendix A). In addition, the Commission has also adopted specific preconditions for the various credential programs. Preconditions for a prospective program sponsor or approved program sponsor are reviewed 1) during the initial institutional approval process, 2) prior to approval of a new educator preparation program, and 3) prior to an accreditation site visit. Preconditions are based either in California state statute or in adopted Commission policy. Because preconditions are largely ministerial and not discretionary, staff is responsible for reviewing documentation submitted by an institution and determining whether an institution has satisfactorily addressed them.

Focus on the Approved Institution and its Approved Educator Preparation Programs

The Commission accredits an institution and all its approved preparation programs. Education Code §44374(d) states that the Commission shall make a single decision to accredit, to accredit with stipulations, or to deny accreditation to all of an institution's credential programs. The Common Standards and the General Preconditions, together, are used to demonstrate institutional compliance with Commission policies and unit level support for all of the educator preparation programs that the institution offers.

The credential specific preconditions are routinely reviewed and updated at the same time that credential specific program standards are reviewed and updated, typically by the same expert standards development panel. The General Preconditions have not been reviewed and updated in a comprehensive manner since their inception in the 1990's. Minor revisions have been made over the years to address particular issues. The preconditions, along with the Common Standards, serve as a gatekeeper for institutions wishing to sponsor educator preparation programs and help ensure those institutions have the capacity, resources, and infrastructure to support high quality preparation programs. Given this important function of the preconditions, and given that much has changed in the educational environment in the past two decades, the Commission provided direction at the June 2012 Commission meeting to begin the discussion to update and revise, as appropriate, the General Preconditions.

Proposed Revised General Preconditions

An agenda item with proposed revisions to the General Preconditions was presented at the September 2012 Commission meeting (<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2012-09/2012-09-2B.pdf>). The Commission requested that feedback on the proposed revisions be

gathered from the Teacher Preparation Advisory Panel (TAP). The purpose of the Commission's Preconditions was shared and the proposed modifications were discussed at the October 2012 TAP meeting. During the November 2012 TAP meeting, the panel members were able to ask clarifying questions about the proposed modifications. The TAP panel members were provided an electronic survey and were asked to provide feedback on the proposed modifications. A total of nineteen individuals from the TAP Panel provided feedback through the electronic survey. The TAP panel supported the modifications in general and for the most part found the language of the proposed preconditions to be clear. If someone replied that the language was not clear, the survey requested that the individual identify the language that was unclear.

The feedback from the TAP Panel was reviewed at the February 2013 Committee on Accreditation (COA) meeting (<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/coa-agendas/2013-02/2013-02-item-18.pdf>). The COA discussed the Preconditions and took action to forward seven of the Preconditions without any additional edits to the Commission. Then the COA continued its discussion on the three remaining proposed Preconditions, a brief summary of the COA's discussion is provided here:

- (5) Prior to Program Approval: This proposed precondition would be new and would ensure that institutions confirm that, in addition to the General Preconditions, they must also meet all relevant program specific preconditions. In the version of the preconditions that the COA was discussing, this precondition was presented as Precondition 9. The COA directed that this precondition be moved earlier in the list of preconditions since it requires an institution to affirm something much like Preconditions 3, 4, 6, and 7.
- (9) Faculty Participation: This precondition generated a rich discussion on a number of concepts.

Which programs should be subject to this precondition?

Currently only the Teaching and Administrative Services preparation programs are addressed by the precondition. The COA discussed that perhaps all educator preparation programs, e.g., school psychology, teacher librarian, school nurses, should be subject to this precondition.

Which faculty should be subject to this precondition?

Currently the precondition applies to only those who teach instructional methods courses. The COA proposes changing this precondition such that all faculty in the school or college of education who regularly teach one or more courses in the program, not just those who teach instructional methods courses, would be required to participate in the public schools at least once every three academic years. The COA suggests that the sentence "*Faculty who are not in the School or College of Education are exempt from this requirement*" be added to the precondition because the Education Code exempts faculty who are not in the school of education from the precondition. Finally, the proposed revised language broadens the precondition from faculty in postsecondary institutions to all faculty from the Department, School, or College of Education in all Commission-approved educator preparation programs.

Should the precondition be broadened to allow for a variety of public school experiences?

The COA discussed the term “public elementary and secondary schools and classrooms” in the currently adopted precondition. The COA suggests that the precondition be revised to “the public school system” to broaden the context and allow appropriate faculty participation from all types of educator preparation programs.

- (10) Program and Candidate Specific Preconditions. The title and substance of this proposed precondition stem from the suggestion that two of the General Preconditions - (9) California Basic Education Skills Test and (10) Certificate of Clearance - be moved to the applicable Program Specific preconditions. A discussion of proposed changes to the substance of these preconditions follows in the next section, but the COA suggested that there be a new General Precondition added that would bring attention to the fact that an institution that operates an approved preparation program shall meet all program specific preconditions including those related to the Basic Skills Requirement and the Certificate of Clearance.

After the discussion, the COA took action to forward the proposed revisions presented in Appendix B to the Commission for consideration and possible adoption. In Appendix B, the *italics* indicate that the language is new or language amended from the adopted Preconditions.

Program Specific Preconditions

Four of the currently adopted General Preconditions are recommended to be moved to the sets of Program Specific Preconditions. The General Preconditions being proposed to be moved are the following:

- (4) Demonstration of Need
- (5) Practitioners’ Participation in Program Design
- (9) California Basic Educational Skills Test
- (10) Certificate of Clearance

Two of the identified preconditions focus on requirements for initial approval of an educator preparation program—Demonstration of Need and Practitioners’ Participation in Program Design—and it seems more appropriate to include these preconditions in the Program Specific Preconditions. These two preconditions are the only General Preconditions that have to be addressed separately by prospective programs and it was complicated explaining this to institutions. The COA agreed that it would be appropriate for these preconditions to be in each program’s set of preconditions.

The remaining two preconditions focus on candidate specific requirements. It is important that the institution understand that there are specific candidate requirements. Therefore the COA recommends that these two preconditions move from the General Preconditions to the Program Specific Preconditions. In addition, the COA proposed some modification in the language of these preconditions as follows.

First, the proposed modification of the precondition related to the Basic Skills Requirement would update the Precondition to reflect current policy in that passage of the CBEST examination is only one way to meet the Basic Skills Requirement. Second, the current precondition related to the

Certificate of Clearance requires that candidates not assume daily student teaching responsibilities until they have obtained the Certificate of Clearance from the Commission. The COA believes that the Certificate of Clearance should be obtained prior to candidates participating in any field experiences, including classroom observations and field experiences that precede daily teaching responsibilities. As a result, the COA proposes to modify the precondition such that “programs shall not allow a candidate to *participate in school-based field experiences* until the candidate obtains a Certificate of Clearance from the Commission.”

The proposed Program Specific Preconditions are provided in Appendix C. The *italics* indicate that the language is new or language amended from the adopted General Preconditions.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Commission adopt the proposed revised General Preconditions (Appendix B). In addition, staff recommends the Commission adopt the proposed four Program Specific Preconditions (Appendix C).

Next Steps

If the Commission adopts the revised General Preconditions and Program Specific Preconditions, staff will disseminate the General Preconditions and Program Specific Preconditions to all institutions approved to sponsor educator preparation programs in California. In addition, the staff would update the appropriate documents and websites with the updated General Preconditions and Program Specific Preconditions. Institutions currently approved to offer educator preparation programs in California will be required to show that they continue to meet the Commission’s Preconditions in the year of their next accreditation site visit. All submitting for Commission approval to sponsor educator preparation programs in California in the future will be required to demonstrate that the Commission’s Preconditions are met as a requirement for initial institutional and initial program approval.

Appendix A

Adopted General Preconditions for All Professional Preparation Programs

Pursuant to Education Code Section 44227 (and 44265) each institution must respond to the ten general preconditions as well as all other applicable program specific preconditions.

The following Preconditions apply to all professional preparation programs. All institutions applying for initial institutional approval or continuing accreditation of their educator preparation programs must respond to the following 10 Preconditions.

General Preconditions Established by the Commission

(1) Accreditation and Academic Credit. To be granted initial institutional accreditation by the Commission to become eligible to submit programs or to be granted initial program accreditation or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the program(s) must be proposed and operated by a college or university that (a) is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges or another of the six regional accrediting associations, and (b) grants baccalaureate academic credit or post baccalaureate academic credit, or both. (This provision does not apply to professional preparation programs offered by school districts.)

For school districts or other non-regionally accredited entities wishing to offer an educator preparation program, the Superintendent or CEO of the district or entity shall submit verification of the governing board's approval of sponsorship of the program. The agreement to sponsor a program must include verification of the following:

Once a candidate is accepted and enrolls in an educator preparation program, the sponsor must offer the approved program, meeting the adopted standards, until the candidate:

- i) completes the program,
- ii) withdraws from the program,
- iii) is dropped from the program based on established criteria, or
- iv) is admitted to another approved program to complete the requirements, with minimal disruption, for the authorization in the event the program closes. In this event, an individual transition plan would need to be developed with each candidate.

(2) Responsibility and Authority. To be granted initial institutional/district accreditation by the Commission or initial program accreditation or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the institution/district shall provide the following information.

(a) Identify the position within the organizational structure that is responsible for ongoing oversight of all credential preparation programs offered by the institution/district (including credential programs offered by the extension division, if any).

(b) Provide a description of the reporting relationship between the position described in (a) and the individuals who coordinate each credential program offered by the institution/district. If a reporting relationship is indirect, describe the levels of authority and responsibility for each credential program.

(3) Personnel Decisions. To be granted initial program accreditation or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, a program of professional preparation must be proposed and operated by an institution/district that makes all personnel decisions without considering differences due to gender or other constitutionally or legally prohibited considerations. These decisions include decisions regarding the admission, retention or graduation of students, and decisions regarding the employment, retention or promotion of employees.

(4) Demonstration of Need. To be granted initial program accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the program proposal must include a demonstration of the need for the program in the region in which it will be operated. Such a demonstration must include, but need not be limited to, assurance by a sample of school administrators that one or more school districts will, during the foreseeable future, hire or assign additional personnel to serve in the credential category.

(5) Practitioners' Participation in Program Design. To be granted initial program accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the program proposal must include verification that practitioners in the credential category have participated actively in the design and development of the program's philosophical orientation, educational goals, and content emphases.

(6) Commission Assurances. To be granted initial program accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the program proposal must (a) demonstrate that the program will fulfill all of the applicable standards of program quality and effectiveness that have been adopted by the Commission; (b) assure that the institution/district will cooperate in an evaluation of the program by an external team or a monitoring of the program by a Commission staff member within four years of the initial enrollment of candidates in the program; and (c) assure that the institution/district will participate in focused reviews of one or more aspects of the program when designated by the Commission.

(7) Requests for Data. To be granted initial or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the institution/district must identify a qualified officer responsible for reporting and respond to all requests from the Commission for data including, but not limited to, program enrollments, program completers, examination results, and state and federal reporting within the time limits specified by the Commission.

General Preconditions Established by State Law

(8) Faculty Participation. Each postsecondary faculty member who regularly teaches one or more courses relating to instructional methods in a college or university program of professional preparation for teaching credentials, including Specialist Credentials, or one or more courses in administrative methods in an Administrative Services Credential program, shall actively participate in public elementary or secondary schools and classrooms at least once every three academic years. *Reference: Education Code Section 44227.5 (a) and (b).*

(9) California Basic Educational Skills Test. In each program of professional preparation, applicants for program admission shall be required to take the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST). The institution shall use the test results to ensure that, upon admission, each candidate receives appropriate academic assistance necessary to pass the examination. *Reference: Education Code Sections 44252 (f) and 44225 (n).*

For Internship Programs: In each internship program of professional preparation, candidates who are admitted shall be required to pass the California Basic Educational Skills Test prior to assuming intern teaching responsibilities. *Reference: Education Code Section 44252 (b).*

Clarification of General Precondition 9

Legislative Intent. General Precondition 9 does not require passage of the CBEST for admission, only that the examination be taken. It is the intent of the Legislature that admission to a program not be denied solely on the basis of having failed to pass the CBEST. Further, it is expected that institutions will make provisions for assisting candidates in passing the exam.

Applicants Residing Out of State When They Apply for Admission. Persons residing outside of California when they apply for admission must take the CBEST no later than the second available administration of the test after enrolling in the program.

Candidate Qualifications. The standard requires that Multiple and Single Subject Credential (Program Standard 17) candidates must pass the CBEST prior to daily student teaching.

(10) Certificate of Clearance. A college or university that operates a program of professional preparation shall not allow a candidate to assume daily student teaching responsibilities until the candidate obtains a Certificate of Clearance from the Commission that verifies the candidate's personal identification, unless the individual has already completed the fingerprint and character identification process and has been issued a valid document by the Commission. *Reference: Education Code Section 44320 (d).*

For Internship Programs: A Certificate of Clearance must be obtained prior to assuming intern teaching responsibilities, intern counseling or psychologist responsibilities.

Appendix B

Proposed Revised General Preconditions

General Preconditions for All Professional Preparation Programs

The following Preconditions apply to all educator preparation programs. All institutions applying for initial institutional approval or continuing accreditation of their educator preparation programs must respond to the following Preconditions.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 44227 (and 44265) each institution must respond to the general preconditions as well as all other applicable program specific preconditions.

General Preconditions Established by the Commission

- (1) Accreditation and Academic Credit.** To be granted initial institutional accreditation or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the program(s) must be proposed and operated by
- (a) **Institutions of higher education:** a college or university that (i) is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges or another of the six regional accrediting associations, and (ii) grants baccalaureate academic credit or post baccalaureate academic credit, or both and (iii) *an institution approved to offer educator preparation in California must notify the Commission within 30 days if its regional accreditation status changes.* (This provision does not apply to professional preparation programs offered by school districts or other sponsors.)
 - (b) **School districts or other non-regionally accredited entities:** the Superintendent or CEO of the district or entity shall submit verification of the governing board's approval of sponsorship of the program. The agreement to sponsor a program must include verification of the following:

Once a candidate is accepted and enrolls in an educator preparation program, the sponsor must offer the approved program, meeting the adopted standards, until the candidate:

- i) completes the program;
- ii) withdraws from the program;
- iii) is dropped from the program based on established criteria; or
- iv) is admitted to another approved program to complete the requirements, with minimal disruption, for the authorization in the event the program closes. In this event, an individual transition plan would need to be developed with each candidate.

- (2) Responsibility and Authority.** To be granted initial institutional accreditation or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the entity shall provide the following information:

- (a) Identify the position within the organizational structure that is responsible for ongoing oversight of all educator preparation programs offered by the entity (including educator preparation programs offered by an extension division, if any).
- (b) Provide a description of the reporting relationship between the position described in (a) and the individual(s) who coordinate each educator preparation program offered by the entity. If a reporting relationship is indirect, describe the levels of authority and responsibility for each educator preparation program.
- (3) **Discrimination.** To be granted initial institutional accreditation or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, a program of professional preparation must be proposed and operated by an entity that makes all personnel decisions without *unlawful discrimination*. These decisions include decisions regarding the admission, retention or graduation of students, and decisions regarding the employment, retention or promotion of employees.
- (4) **Commission Assurances.** To be granted initial institutional accreditation or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the program proposal must: (a) demonstrate that the program will fulfill all of the applicable standards of program quality and effectiveness that have been adopted by the Commission, (b) assure that the sponsor will cooperate in an evaluation of the program by an external team or a monitoring of the program by a Commission staff member, and (c) assure that the sponsor will *participate fully in the Commission's accreditation system*.
- (5) **Prior to Program Approval.** *To be granted initial program accreditation or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the entity must confirm that there are program-specific Preconditions that must be met including preconditions for initial program approval (Demonstration of Need and Practitioner Participation in Program Design).*
- (6) **Requests for Data.** To be granted initial institutional accreditation or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the entity must identify a qualified officer responsible for reporting and respond to all requests from the Commission for data including, but not limited to, program enrollments, program completers, examination results, and state and federal reporting within the time limits specified by the Commission.
- (7) **Veracity in all Claims and Documentation Submitted.** To be granted initial institutional accreditation or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the entity must *positively affirm the veracity of all statements and documentation submitted to the Commission. Evidence of a lack of veracity is cause for denial of initial institutional accreditation or for stipulations from the Committee on Accreditation*
- (8) **Grievance Process:** To be granted initial institutional accreditation or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the sponsor *must have a clearly delineated grievance process for candidates and applicants. The grievance process information must be accessible to all candidates and applicants and the institution must be prepared to provide documentation that the candidate has been informed of the grievance process and that the process has been followed.*

(9) Faculty and Instructional Personnel Participation. *All faculty and instructional personnel who regularly teach one or more courses in an educator preparation program leading to a credential, shall actively participate in the public school system at least once every three academic years, appropriate to their credential area. Faculty who are not in the Department, School or College of Education are exempt from this requirement. Reference: Education Code Section 44227.5 (a) and (b).*

(10) Program and Candidate Specific Preconditions. *An institution which operates an approved preparation program shall meet all program specific preconditions, including:*

- a. *Require applicants for program admission to take the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST) or have satisfied the Basic Skills Requirement (BSR).*
- b. *Not allow a candidate to participate in public school-based field activities until the candidate obtains a Certificate of Clearance from the Commission.*

Appendix C

Proposed Program Specific Preconditions

These Preconditions would be added to the sets of program specific Preconditions.

- (11) Demonstration of Need.** To be granted initial program accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the program proposal must include a demonstration of the need for the program in the region in which it will operate. Such a demonstration must include, but need not be limited to, assurance by a sample of school administrators that one or more school districts will, during the foreseeable future, hire or assign additional personnel to serve in the credential category.
- (12) Practitioners' Participation in Program Design.** To be granted initial program accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the program proposal must include verification that practitioners in the credential category have participated actively in the design and development of the program's philosophical orientation, educational goals, and content emphases.
- (13) Basic Skills Requirement.** In each program of professional preparation, applicants for program admission shall be required to take the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST) *or have satisfied the Basic Skills Requirement (BSR)*. The institution shall use the CBEST results to ensure that, upon admission, each candidate receives appropriate academic assistance necessary to pass the examination. *Reference: Education Code Sections 44252 (f) and 44225 (n).*

For Internship Programs: In each internship program of professional preparation, candidates who are admitted shall be required to satisfy the *Basic Skills Requirement* prior to assuming intern teaching responsibilities. *Reference: Education Code Section 44252 (b).*

Clarification of Precondition 13

Legislative Intent. Precondition 13 does not require passage of the CBEST for admission, only that the examination be taken. It is the intent of the Legislature that admission to a program not be denied solely on the basis of having failed to pass the CBEST. Further, it is expected that institutions will make provisions for assisting candidates in passing the exam.

Applicants Residing Out of State When They Apply for Admission. Persons residing outside of California when they apply for admission must take the CBEST no later than the second available administration of the test after enrolling in the program.

- (14) Certificate of Clearance.** An entity that operates a program of professional preparation shall not allow a candidate to *participate in school-based field experiences* until the candidate obtains a Certificate of Clearance from the Commission that verifies the candidate's personal identification, unless the individual has already completed the fingerprint and character identification process and has been issued a valid document by the Commission. *Reference: Education Code Section 44320 (d).*